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10 April, 1946

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MEMORANDUM FOR

Chief, Central Planning Staff.

SUBJECT: Report, for the Record, on Conference with Officials of the Bureau of the Census.

1. In accordance with arrangements made by Information Branch, C.P.S., Dr. A. Ross Eckler, Chief Social Science Analyst and Dr. A. J. Jaffe, Statistician, of the Bureau of the Census, met with a group of representatives of the federal agencies concerned with foreign intelligence in the interest of the national security, at 1400 (2:00PM) on Monday, 8 April, 1946.

2. The meeting was held in conference room 5134-D, New War Department Building, and the following persons were present in addition to Drs. Eckler and Jaffe:-

Colonel McLean - representing G-2, WDGS;
Captain Pehlan, U.S.N. - representing ONI;
Colonel Robert Taylor, III - representing A-2, Hq. AAF;
Colonel G. E. Fearing, Jr. - representing State Dept.;
Mr. D. M. Ladd, Asst. Director, FBI;
Mr. Donald C. Riley - representing Bureau of the Budget;
Colonel W. A. F.

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3. The gentlemen of the Bureau explained the type of statistical work they do and the means they have developed for verifying figures and tables published by foreign countries. They stated that statistics are exchanged with some foreign countries; that efforts are being made to establish such exchanges with other countries (e.g. Russia); that aid is given to more backward countries in the development of statistical processes; etc.

4. In the course of round-table discussion which followed the general presentation, it was brought out that, by means of sustained comparative statistical study:-

- a. food crises can be predicted with great accuracy and—if proper advance steps are taken—starvation conditions can be prevented. Such studies on a continuing basis are projected under the United Nations plans.
- b. Flow of strategic materials into and out of the United States, or any other country, can be followed.

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- c. Population and other figures published by foreign countries can be checked and their degrees of accuracy can be determined.
- d. Manpower available for various phases of national life in foreign countries can be determined, by application of certain rules to published vital statistics which first have been checked as indicated in c., above.

5. The round-table discussion brought out, also, that:-

- a. There is no control exercised over the distribution of the Bureau's published reports, tables, etc.; any person or organization can purchase the publications at the Government Printing Office.
- b. The Bureau has no funds which permit its making special studies for other agencies but--if the other agencies requiring special studies reimburse the Bureau--it is prepared to make such special studies to the limit of its available manpower. Such special studies are not published and can be classified as required.
- c. Although Russian statistics get much publicity, it was stated by Dr. Jaffe that the U.S. published about one thousand (1,000) times as many statistics as Russia does.
- d. Sampling technique is used widely by the Bureau, using samples of 2,000 in some cases and 20,000 in others. ^{25X1A9a} [redacted] asked if samples so small as 200 were ever used and cited a case in which so small a sample had been used with excellent and accurate results. The gentlemen of the Census stated that such small samples were not used by them; that the cost of sampling 2,000 was little greater than that of sampling 200 and that, for their purposes, the larger sample was necessary.

6. It is suggested that a future conference with the audience including all government agencies interested in the Census statistics and their ramifications, might be advantageous. The gentlemen of the Census are prepared to appear and the Information Branch is prepared to arrange the conference.

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Colonel, Air Corps
Chief, Information Branch, C.P.S.

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